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**THE SEA-BOARD SLAVE STATES.**

*(Resumed from our last.)*

THE early industrial condition of Virginia forms the next section of Mr. Olmsted's valuable work. There is little about Slavery in it, but it is necessary to introduce it in its place, in order that the reader may fully comprehend the policy to which it ultimately led in relation to the slave-population, and to a not less important part of the community, namely, the "poor whites."

Mr. Olmsted says:

**"INDUSTRIAL CONDITION OF VIRGINIA IN  
THE HALCYON PAST.**

"Beverley gives a detailed account of the industrial condition of the province early in the eighteenth century.

"In extreme fruitfulness," he says, "it is exceeded by no Other." "No Seed is sown there but it thrives, and most of the Northern Plants are improved by being transplanted thither." "And yet there's very little Improvement made among them, seldom Anything us'd in Traffick but Tobacco." "Fruit trees are wonderfully quick of Growth. Yet they are very few that take any Care at all for an Orchard; nay, many that have good Orchards are so negligent of them, as to let them go to Ruin, and expose the Trees to be torn and bar'd by Cattle." "A Garden is nowhere sooner form'd than here, and yet they ha'nt many Gardens in the Country fit to bear the Name of Gardens." "All Sorts of English Grain thrive, yet they don't make a Trade of any of them." "The Sheep increase well, and bear good Fleeces; but they are generally suffered to be torn off their Backs by Briars and Bushes, or else are left rotting on the Dunghill with their Skins." "The Woods

produce great variety of Incense and sweet Gums, Honey, and Sugar. Yet there's no use made of any of them, either for Profit or Refreshment." "All Sorts of Naval Stores may be produced there, as Pitch, Tar, Turpentine, Plank, Timber, and all Sorts of Masts and Yards, besides Sails, Cordage, and Iron; and all these may be transported by an easy Water-carriage."

"These, and a thousand other Advantages that Country produces, which its Inhabitants make no manner of use of. They can see their Naval Stores daily Benefit other People, who send thither to build Ships. They receive no Benefit nor Refreshment from the sweet and precious Things they have growing amongst them; but make use of the Industry of England for all such Things.

"What Advantage do they see the neighbouring Plantations make of their Grain and Provisions, while they, who can produce them infinitely better, not only neglect the making a Trade thereof, but even a necessary Provision against an accidental Scarcity, contenting themselves with a Supply of Food from Hand to Mouth; so that if it should please God to send them an unseasonable Year, there would not be found in the Country Provisions sufficient to support the People for three Months extraordinary!

"They depend upon the Liberality of Nature, without endeavouring to improve its Gifts by Art or Industry. They sponge upon the Blessings of a warm Sun and a fruitful Soil, and almost grutch the Pains of gathering in the Bounties of the Earth. I should be ashamed to publish this slothful Indolence of my Countrymen, but that I hope it will some time or other rouse them out of the Lethargy, and excite them to make the most of all these happy Advan-

tages which Nature has given them; and if it does this, I am sure they will have the Goodness to forgive me.—*Beverley*, p. 284.

"We Americans have now a habit of congratulating each other on the material prosperity and independence of our country, and of glorifying our wise government, and our "free institutions," as the cause of it. But we should not forget that we have lately, by the dignified and deliberate act of the Republic's servants, given free range, over millions of fertile acres, to essentially the same institutions of society which produced, and which still, spite of every advantageous surrounding, are still maintaining, in Virginia, that paralysis of enterprise and imbecility of industry, thus pathetically deplored a hundred and fifty years ago.

"When Beverley speaks of the adjoining colonies, as taking the trade of Virginia, he can refer only to the more democratic and free-labouring Northern Colonies. In the Carolinas, an exactly similar state of things existed to that in Virginia.

"So early as 1676, it is recorded that 'New England traders, penetrating into the interior of the province of Albemarle, and bringing their goods to every man's door, had obtained a monopoly of the produce of the province. The proprietors in England endeavoured, in vain, to substitute a direct intercourse with Britain, for this disadvantageous commerce.\*

"In 1677, the chief magistrate of this province was deposed and imprisoned, by an insurrection of the people, consequent on an attempt to interrupt the New-England trade. The Assembly having once complained that the English proprietors did not give sufficient encouragement to immigration, and that the country consequently suffered from a deficiency of tradesmen and mechanics, they (the English proprietors) made answer that the inconvenience complained of was promoted by the complainants—

"By the lazy rapacity with which each desired to surround himself with a large expanse of property, over which he could exercise no other act of ownership than that of excluding the occupants by whom it might be most advantageously cultivated."

"The Assembly, however, followed its own counsel, and decreed that none should be sued for debt, within the limits of its jurisdiction, for five years after his arrival; that no inhabitant should accept a power of attorney, to collect debts contracted abroad, &c. This had the desired effect, of attracting immigration; but not of a very respectable or valuable character. Virginia and Maryland both had laws of similar import.

"That Beverley did not exaggerate the danger of famine, at a time when the annual export of tobacco, to pay for clothing, slaves, and other important necessities and luxuries, was between thirty and forty millions of pounds annually,† is evident, from the legislative precautions taken to prevent it. The prices of every other product,

except corn, were, at one time, fixed by law, with the avowed purpose of inducing farmers to plant it; three officers were appointed in every county, for the express purpose of obliging every settler to plant and tend sufficient corn-ground to insure an adequate supply to maintain his own family! Public granaries were established, to which every planter was ordered to contribute one bushel of corn annually, to be disposed of as the commonwealth should require. I am told, and the Southern agricultural journals confirm it, that such laws are needed now, in some parts of the cotton States, and would be advocated, but for the shame of publishing to the North the irreformable improvidence of the people.

"Some of my readers may require yet to have it explained how it was that land monopoly, Slavery, and servile, or degraded and ignorant labour led to that state of things which Beverley bewailed, and which, indeed, to this day constitutes, strangely enough, both the glory and the shame, which is the basis alike of the weak vanity and the impotent anger of the sons of the Virginia cavaliers.

"Manufactories and mechanic arts of all sorts thrive best in towns or dense communities, because different branches assist each other, not only morally, by stimulating mental activity, but materially. The carriage-maker calls upon the blacksmith, the currier, and the worker in leather; the blacksmith may, at any time, be glad of the services of the currier, the cobbler, or the wheelwright, to mend his bellows. The spinners and weavers need to have near them, masons, machinists, and millwrights. All need farmers (not planters) to supply their daily needs. In a country, therefore, where all men 'mind nothing but to be masters of a great estate, and to plant themselves separately on their several plantations,' trades and manufactures are not likely to thrive. But, suppose one of these plantation lords to own a large number of boys, whose labour he desires to appropriate most advantageously to himself. The employment to which they must be trained cannot be of such a character as to require the use of much discretion; because there can be no sufficient motive to induce them to exercise it, which does not involve personal interest in the object of that employment; and therefore a partnership in its possession, or a receipt of wages in some proportion to skill. In proportion, also, to the amount of discretion required of a slave, the reins of authority must be slackened. If he uses his own skill, he must go his own way. If he goes his own way, he will go negligently, and with all possible indolence, unless he has some advantage for himself to gain, by care and despatch. This he hardly can have, if the result of his labour is to inure wholly to the advantage of another. The selfishness, therefore, of the owner of a slave-boy, will lead him to undertake to make the boy labour at such simple work, and under such circumstances as will keep him most easily and certainly under his control.

"It is a fact, that slave-mechanics, manufacturers' hands, stevedores, servants, and those engaged in almost all employments, superior to

\* Grahame's *History of North America*, p. 120.

† De Bow's *Resource*, iii. p. 347.

that of field-hands, in the Southern States, are, nearly always, 'gratified' with some sort of wages, or perquisites, or stimulants, to skill and industry, in some form; and are more intelligent, more privileged, and more insubordinate than the general mass. This will be sufficiently apparent from observations I shall hereafter record.

#### THE REVOLUTION OF 1776.

"The struggle for equality in all the relations of life, for the liberty of man against the dominion of man, is necessarily founded on the consciousness of the importance of the individual.

"Their motto is, All by the People: their practice, Nothing for the People."—*Introduction to a History of the Nineteenth Century.*

GERVINUS.

"Ignorance is weakness; and the ignorant man instinctively merges his ambition and his claims of justice with those of an aggregate—makes that aggregate an object of partiality and bigotry, and finds satisfaction for his enthusiasm in the success of those who guide and represent it, though that success in no wise affect his own interest.

"The peculiar political aspiration of the people of Virginia, as a whole, was, on this account, less to maintain due consideration for individual rights, than to obtain and preserve communal independence and notoriety.

"The wealthy and educated class, however, while they were entirely *en rapport* with the general communal spirit, were also remarkably characterized by personal assumption and dignity. And this, because the smallness of their number, proportionately to the whole people, and their widely-separated residences, gave to each a high local consideration and power, and led to inordinate self-respect.

"The unusual and unexpected exactions of the exterior royal government aroused, therefore, among the influential class of Virginians, a more passionate discontent than elsewhere; while the poor people were more ready than those of other colonies, perhaps, to encourage a disposition in their leaders to communal independence.

"Virginia, therefore, was early and determined in the expression of her dissatisfaction with the royal impositions, which led to the Revolution.

"Yet great agitation, much and rapid, and excited progress of thought, was necessary, before the aristocratic or the yeoman class could come to the point of actual treason, or bring to it the poor and ignorant, and the superstitiously loyal.

"If it was right for them to resist these demands of their king, the conscientious would ask, how should they define what demands it was not right to resist? If their royal master's authority was exercised by right divine, it was wrong for them to resist it at all—nay, even to feel discontent. If it was not by right divine, then by what right? On what right rests any governmental authority? Is there no alternative between despotism and anarchy? What is the basis of civil government?

"There could be no hearty, united, and determined resistance, while these questions were left

without some logically-satisfactory answer. The people at large could not be called upon and stirred up to a spirited defence, without knowing more clearly what it was that was to be defended—what they were to gain. Stamp-acts and tea-taxes did not really trouble the great majority of Virginians in the slightest degree, personally, only the people of some property—for the mass were still illiterate vagabonds; but, even among the better sort, no man could trust another, till each knew what all wanted, and to what limit all were prepared to stand out.

"The best men in the province—those in whose goodness, wisdom, and bravery, their neighbours had most confidence—were, therefore, appointed to make a declaration of the principles and purposes by and for which the government of Virginia should thereafter be guided, and which should constitute a platform broad enough for all to stand upon, without jealousies and distrusts, and so just and reasonable as to command the respect and fealty of every individual, and of all classes.

"The instrument of this declaration is still preserved, as a curious historical relic in Virginia, and is interesting, if for nothing else, as an evidence to what lengths men will go, when they have set their hearts upon an object, and find it desperate business to accomplish it. For it announces principles which the intelligent classes in Virginia, always before, and generally since, have held to be absurd, preposterous, and dangerous.

"For instance, it asserts the equality of men, in freedom and independence—a 'self-evident absurdity,' as they now say; for a strong and wise man can, at any time, prevent or destroy the freedom and independence of a weak man, of which proof is not wanting. That every man has certain 'inherent rights'—one of which is named liberty; another absurdity, for the same reason. Another, the right of labour ('of obtaining property')—not only absurd, but very horrible: another, the right of enjoying the fruits of his labour, to the fullest degree compatible with security to all other men to equally enjoy the results of their labour—a dangerous and impracticable doctrine: another, the right of private judgment, in matters of religion and morality, so far as it can be exercised compatibly with the preservation to all of this and all other rights, of which very little is now said.

"On this original platform, reasonable or not reasonable—and I do not want any one to doubt a moment that I consider it reasonable, and suppose that I see a meaning quite reconcilable with the facts considered to render it absurd, only I wish to be respectful to those who cannot—on this platform they impliedly promised, if they should succeed in maintaining their independence of the power then deemed wickedly oppressive, to re-organize society; and they called upon all the people of Virginia, of all classes, of all degrees of muscular strength and intellectual capacity and acquirements, poor and rich, cavalier and base-blooded, to fraternize, and rise, and fight.

"And they did it, fraternizing at the same time with others making similar professions, and having similar purposes: and they all fought to-



gether, and succeeded, all equally, in obtaining—not the security of these so-called natural rights, but—communal independence of their old king.

“By the time they came to the work of forming the instruments of order for their to-be-reorganized society, there had evidently occurred a violent re-action from the fervency and highly-stimulated judgment under which the Bill of Rights had been drawn up, among the influential people of Virginia—for the constitution of the new State was widely inconsistent with the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, previously distinctly proclaimed, and promised to be used as its supports and barriers.

“The people, imposed upon and deprived of their acknowledged rights, be it observed, were by chance the weakest, most ignorant, and poorest; consequently, the least likely to regard the imposition, and the least able to resist it.

“There were a few men, among those whose natural rights were respected, who did not like this, and who strongly protested against it. Among them, Thomas Jefferson was foremost.

“To the new Constitution of Virginia he strongly objected, in several particulars, not only on the score of consistency, but of justice and good judgment. For instance, that the majority of the tax-paying and fighting men of the State were unrepresented in its government; and again, that things had been so managed, that even among those who were permitted to vote there were nineteen thousand in the rich plantation counties of the east who could elect more members of the legislature than thirty thousand in the more free counties of the west. Accordingly, the State would be virtually ruled, not by the people through their elected representatives, but by an oligarchy of slaveholders.\*

“A large majority of the people of the country were Dissenters from the Established Church of the English Colony; yet, a proposal to realize the declared right of entire religious freedom was met by an opposition which occasioned, as Jefferson afterwards declared, the most severe political struggle in which he was ever engaged. The most that could be obtained at that time, after all, was an abrogation of the laws which denounced punishment for maintaining un-orthodox opinions, and for not attending the Episcopal church; and acts exempting Dissenters from contributing to the support of the Episcopal clergy, and permitting them to build houses of worship of their own. It was not till several years later that any one else than the Episcopal clergymen were permitted to solemnize or legalize marriages, except by the purchase of a special license. The Episcopal church still continued to be the ‘Established Church,’ and other religious Societies were merely ‘tolerated.’†

#### “THE ARISTOCRACY UNDERMINED.

“Next to religious freedom, the most important change demanded by the avowed principles of the Revolution, was an alteration of

the laws with regard to the descent of property. The laws of primogeniture and descent in tail, were felt to be unnatural, discouraging to industry, and, by their effect in aggravating the evils to society of the excessive possession and control of land, opposed to the declared right of all to the ‘means of obtaining wealth.’

“Mr. Howison thus clearly and truly describes these laws and their influence:

“‘Nothing can convey a more vivid idea of the strong aristocratic feeling pervading Virginia, than her course as to this scheme. In England the courts had set their faces against entails, and permitted them to be *docked* by a fine and recovery; but the law-makers of the old dominion held all such innovations in high contempt, and, by a statute enacted in 1705, forbade their use. To complete their work in 1727, they enacted that slaves might be attached to lands, and might be entailed with them, subject to all the incidents proper to the system. Over the whole eastern region fine lands were held by families, who guarded their privileges with more than English jealousy.

“‘An aristocracy neither of talent, nor of learning, nor of moral worth, but of landed and slave interest, was (thus) fostered. The members of the Council of State were always chosen from this class; and in many respects they were regarded as the peerage of the land.

“‘Where lands could neither be sold nor mortgaged, debts must often have been contracted which were never paid; yet the tenants in tail lived in luxurious ease, to which others were strangers. The rich people of Virginia were then richer than at present, and the poor were poorer. There was no prospect for that equal distribution of property which is the legitimate reward of industry. Coaches drawn by four horses rolled from the doors of the aristocracy, and plate of gold and silver, in the utmost profusion, glittered on their board; while the poor artisan and labourer worked for the necessities of life, without any hope of ever gaining any portion of the property guarded by entail.’

“A bill, proposed by Jefferson, providing that thereafter all estates in tail should be converted into fee simple, so that the owner might sell, devise, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of them as he thought proper, was at length carried, after another very warm and protracted struggle.

“Next the law of primogeniture was attacked. A strong defence was made for it by the aristocratic party; and when they found it must be repealed, they urged, ‘in the spirit of compromise,’ that the Jewish rule of inheritance should be substituted: this gives the eldest son a double portion. Mr. Jefferson answered the proposal with the remark, that unless the eldest son required a double portion of food, or would do double the work of any other, there was no justice in giving him double the property.

“The law was repealed. Mr. Featherstonough, an English Tory, who visited the United States in 1836, dates from this repeal all the adversity under which Virginia has since suffered. The seeds of much of the adversity which he witnessed were produced by the law: cutting it away did not destroy at once their vitality; but it removed a pernicious shade from labour,

\* See Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, pp. 172, 173.

† Howison, ii. 192.



and, but for this timely relief, industry would not, I am convinced, be now known to have ever existed at all in Eastern Virginia, except by the evidence of the desert it had been forced to create.

"The argument against all these changes was, not that they were not demanded by justice and sound principles of government, but that it was not safe to move so rapidly. They were old institutions, under which Virginia had existed for a century or more. They were unjust, it might in some sense be admitted; and their effects, it could not be denied, were sometimes rather unhappy; but destroy them, replace them with laws more abstractly just, and—who knew that there would not follow worse consequences? It was fanatical to push forward the experiment so rapidly. Besides, people have been born into the world under these laws, and had taken duties and responsibilities upon themselves, in the expectation that they would be sustained. They had a right to demand, it was urged, therefore, that they should be sustained: but now, when the right principles of law have been enunciated, leave it for posterity to enact them. It will then be every man's own fault if he is not prepared for them.

"Jefferson well understood the danger of this course. He urged that justice should be done, and right should be maintained then and there, and at all hazards. And with the prophetic mind of true statesmanship, such as we have had no approach to since he uttered, in 1787, this remarkable warning and prediction (men who pretend to be his disciples should not pass it lightly)—

"*The spirit of the times may alter—will alter. Our rulers will become corrupt, our people careless. It can never be too often repeated that the time for fixing every essential right on a legal basis is while our rulers are honest, and ourselves united. From the conclusion of this war we shall be going down hill. It will not then be necessary to resort every moment to the people for support. They will be forgotten, therefore, and their rights disregarded. They will forget themselves, but in the sole faculty of making money, and will never think of omitting to effect a due respect for their rights. The shackles, therefore, which shall not be knocked off at the conclusion of this war, will remain on us long—will be made heavier and heavier, till our rights shall revive, or expire in a convulsion.\**

"Impelled by these convictions, while the country was yet excited with all the turmoil and terror of invasion and war, while a price was yet set upon his head, as there last year was on the heads of men who were labouring to have his principles of government carried out in our young States, Mr. Jefferson, besides the radical improvements already noted, earnestly and confidently desired to have permanent enactments introduced into the laws for the emancipation of the slaves.†

\* Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, p. 239.

† Ibid. p. 204.

## JAMAICA.

### THE EMANCIPATED NEGROES VINDICATED.

THE following able paper has been prepared by the Rev. Mr. Robb, who has just returned from Jamaica, and who has paid great attention to the subject on which he writes. We commend it to the careful perusal of the friends of freedom and of Christian Missions. It is taken from the *United Presbyterian Missionary Record*, for November.

"Something needs to be said in behalf of the peasantry of Jamaica, for the enemy has been busy at his old familiar trade of slander, and not without some success.

"It is undeniable that a great work of God attended emancipation. The Lord did then work wondrously, and gave spiritual freedom to many, along with civil liberty to all. While, perhaps, a good deal of chaff was then swept into some of the churches, there was not a little precious wheat also, which will all, in due time, be found safely garnered in heaven. It is due to God that this be remembered with grateful praise; and to deny it, when the truth about it may be known, appears nothing short of blasphemy.

"Yet there are men who say they do not believe that any good has come of emancipation, or of Missions, in Jamaica; but that the people are, morally and socially, far worse than they were when slaves. And, from time to time, unscrupulous foes, or renegade friends, or misinformed, prejudiced strangers, have sent or carried to this country such an evil report, that many once hearty friends have been terribly staggered and discouraged. And, unfortunately, those who are unfriendly, being intelligent and educated, and being able to put their ideas into shape, can command the public ear by means of the press; while, on the other hand, the poor black people even do not know what is written and spoken against them. Not one of them, perhaps, ever read a sentence of Thomas Carlyle's *Occasional Discourse on Negro Slavery*; or of the flippant tirades of *The Times*; or of the ferocious attacks of some of the newspapers of the United States; or, indeed, of any thing else that has been said against them. Hence the British public, or that portion thereof which is interested in this question, are used to hear only one side of it. The black people cannot explain or deny what they do not even know to be laid to their charge; and what their Missionaries may say in their behalf is apt to be scorned as the testimony of weakness or prejudice. Thus ever fare—thus ever suffer—the defenceless and the ignorant.

"As a sample of the misrepresentations complained of, we may mention Carlyle's *Discourse*. An American writer says of it, and truly, that 'it lacks all the moral, and many of the intellectual traits, which distinguish the writings of that gifted man.' That such a man could cherish and utter the sentiments of that paper, plainly proves that the work of slander has been too successfully pursued. In his own peculiar style, he utters thoughts which, we fear, float through the minds of not a few genuine friends of Anglo-Ethiopia. Such reports of the degeneracy of the people of Jamaica were received, some months

ago, by the Committee of the *Anti-Slavery Society*, and they thought it necessary to make particular inquiry, by circulars sent to some of the Missionaries there. It was said that the people are rapidly going back from all that is good, losing their interest in church and school, neither fearing God nor regarding man. We trust that the replies sent to these inquiries will prove a sufficient refutation of the charges referred to. Let the worst be known; but let the truth be known.

"Surely those who live and labour in that island, who see the people in their houses, converse with them freely, know their real feelings, and have no selfish ends to serve in giving their testimony, are more to be trusted than the employers, who are apt to be soured by the tug and worry unavoidable in their circumstances; or than strangers, who usually content themselves with one side of the evidence, and who are not in circumstances to see exactly how matters stand between the employers and the people.

"Carlyle pictures the black man as a lazy animal, who, by half an hour's labour in the day, can raise pumpkin enough to keep him in life; but beyond his mess of pumpkin he wants, he cares for nothing. Swine-like—up to the ears in pumpkin, sucking his sugar-cane, and satisfied therewith, he refuses to do work to produce the sugars, coffees, and other precious things of that fertile clime, unless bribed by exorbitant wages, such as no conceivable richness of crop can enable the planter to pay.

"It is plain that this writer, and others, have believed the coarse caricatures which have been sent home, by persons living in, or merely visiting, Jamaica. It is ridiculous that men so wise, and with such a reputation to sustain, should have gravely used language like that of the *Occasional Discourse*. We laugh at the simplicity of those who believe that the black people live mainly on pumpkin and cane-juice, or that half an hour's labour in the day is enough to produce provisions for a family. And we are indignant at those who, in levity or in malice, say such things. He who, having been in the West Indies, says them, knows that he lies. He who, never having been there to see things with his own eyes, yet believes such statements, is simply be-fooled.

"It may seem almost ridiculous to say so much on this topic. But surely it is not unimportant to rebut those statements, which led such a wise and great man as Thomas Carlyle to conclude that Anglo-Ethiopia will be lost for good, unless there be a return to Slavery. For this is the cure which he recommends for the evils that afflict the West Indies. The beneficent whip, since other methods avail not, must be used to make the black people work. In our own country, masters and servants are allowed to make their own bargain. And if an employer cannot get people to accept his terms, he must even be content to want them. But Carlyle would have the terms fixed by law, and of course enforced by penalties, on which the black man shall give his service to the planter. All very well, if an arrangement can be entered into voluntarily; but, at all events, some arrangement *must* be made, by which the Ethiopian shall be obliged to

serve his paler but wiser brother! In other words, the imperial arm, which but yesterday broke the fetter, must to-day repair it; and Britain must make herself the jest of mankind, perpetrating the unheard-of folly of paying twenty millions to wipe away a foul abuse, and then, in a few years, paying, perhaps, a larger sum to re-introduce it.

"If the statements—the untrue, the slanderous statements complained of—are believed, then God is robbed of his glory; his people are denied the encouragement which success in the past affords in view of the work of the future; and grievous injustice is done to a defenceless people.

"This subject has too close a connection with the West-Indian Missions, and not less with our own than with others. If it be true that no good has come of all that has been done in Jamaica in the way of Christian instruction; if its peasantry are nothing better than a race of lazy vagabonds, having a decided preference for the licence of the savage state, and rapidly sinking more deeply into it; then do not tell us that the interest felt in these Missions will not be cooled down, and that we shall not find it difficult to answer the argument so current in the mouth of the slaveholder, that the Ethiopian was created for Slavery, and that emancipation only brings ruin to his owner, and renewed barbarism to himself.

"Now, with regard to the charge, that when his animal wants are supplied, the black man is unwilling to work another stroke, on any reasonable terms, we say, it is simply false. Numbers of industrious black people, indeed, are unwilling to hire their services to Jamaica proprietors, on account of the smallness of the wages. One shilling a-day—in some localities ninepence a-day—is the usual rate; and this is all that an able man can earn by a hard day's work, except at crop time on sugar properties, when, by some hours' extra labour, a few pence more may be earned. This, it must be confessed, is a very slender tie to bind the workpeople to the properties. Did they not take time to cultivate their own provision fields, they could not even get food out of their wages. Many find it far more profitable to work their own freeholds; and, in refusing to be at the command of the planter, at his times, and on his terms, when they can do better otherwise, are they not following the path which every white man follows all the world over? Have they not a right to do so? Would they not be fools to act otherwise? What are Britain's rights—what are the rights of the self-styled wiser white man—under leave of Carlyle and others, we ask, to torture and task the African—to compel his service without conciliating his affections, or consulting his pleasure?

"We do, then, fearlessly meet those sweeping charges with a sweeping denial. It is pure injustice to condemn a whole people for the delinquencies of a portion, and to make no allowance for those so circumstanced and trained as our West-Indian peasantry. Shame on those who follow such a course for the purpose of injuring the cause of freedom, or under the influence of chagrin, because they are more dependent on the black man than the black man upon them.

"It must not be forgotten that human progress is regulated by certain laws. The little seed, which to-day is planted in the soil, is not seen to-morrow developed into a full-grown tree or plant, like Jonah's gourd. It might be easy for the ever-blessed Spirit to transform the worst of sinners into a perfect saint all at once, and to make a nation of debased heathens rise into spiritual life, and spring forth, adorned with all the beauties of intelligence and holiness, in the course of a single week, or even a single day. But is that the way in which the Lord works? Does not the kingdom of heaven grow as grows the little seed, by slow and imperceptible steps? It is not like a little leaven, which gives rise to a process of fermentation, in course of time leavening the whole lump?

"Now, let it be remembered, that only nineteen years have elapsed since these West Indians were freed from a rigorous bondage, and allowed to learn the truth, and even to obey the laws of God, when they were disposed to do so. Before that time, the masters had the power, and many used it, to shut, not merely the book of knowledge, but the kingdom of heaven against their poor slaves. We shall not seek to estimate the exact amount of progress that may reasonably be expected in the short period of nineteen years; but we are happy to be able to refer our readers to the preliminary paper in the *Record* for September, in which there are some most just remarks on this subject, which should be borne in mind by those who desire to judge rightly.

"All things considered, the progress made by our West-Indian freedmen is not surpassed by any thing of the kind related in the annals of the world. We glory in this as fraught with honour to the blessed gospel, and to the God of the gospel, and laden with promise to the children of Africa.

"It is well that we can, in strict truth, assert it to be a general rule, that, just in proportion to the care and pains bestowed upon them by their Missionaries, are they found yielding the fruits of Christian and social virtue. The best of them are found connected with the best-worked Mission stations, and brought up under the most zealous and painstaking Missionaries. They are not always to be met with in the gangs that work in the cane-fields; for it is the all but universal testimony of brother Missionaries, that the best of their people rather avoid the sugar properties. One reason for this is, the fact that no decent accommodation being provided, except on a very few estates, for those labourers whose homes are at a distance, men and women herd together very often in a single apartment, after the manner of beasts. And another reason is, the corrupting influences—the evil communications—that abound where large numbers assemble, and where things go on—as they are well known to go on—among the working gangs, whether young or old.

"There is not a Mission station in Jamaica, where the right means have been rightly used, that cannot furnish a refutation of the charges made by the enemies of freedom. We know too well the imperfections of the very best of our Missionary fruits. Yet no true man, capable of judging, and possessed of the means of learning

the facts, will deny the existence among our Mission churches of a cheering amount of genuine piety. With what zeal, perseverance, affection, prayer, and faith, were many—were, perhaps, most of these churches gathered and tended!

"We know best about our own—the Presbyterian Mission—one of the youngest of the West-Indian Missions. In speaking of it more particularly, we would carefully avoid a spirit of self-glorification, and would also give due meed of praise to those brethren of other divisions of the great army of Christ, who have borne the burden and heat of the day, and who are still bearing their part in the warfare now going forward. Of our twenty-four stations in Jamaica and the Grand Cayman, the oldest is only thirty-three years old. They have been worked, as they were commenced, chiefly by Missionaries from Scotland; but at several the work has, from time to time, been hindered by painful, and sometimes lengthened, vacancies. Persons have been admitted to church-fellowship with great caution, and never without having been known to, and carefully instructed and examined by, the Missionaries themselves. For some years back, the number in fellowship has stood at about 4000, while not less than about 15,000, of all ages, are reckoned as adherents, and enjoy the advantages afforded by the Mission.

"Now, we assert that the ordinary fruits of Christian labour, of gospel preaching, of pastoral supervision, of scriptural discipline, are found in a gratifying degree in connection with these churches. We dare not say that there is no chaff among them. Of what church in Britain can that be truly said? But we dare say that there is precious wheat to be found in them, some of it, considering the circumstances, of a rare and ripe order. How much of the morality of Scotland is due to the force of public opinion, and the dread of public censure? How much of the correctness of professors is due to the influence of the love of Christ, and hatred of sin as sin? How much secret abomination is covered with the robe of hypocrisy? How many 'steal the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in'?

"In Jamaica, the only reprovers of vice are the pulpit, and a certain few who are wholly on the Lord's side. Vice is enshrined in the great house, and consecrated, in the estimation of the baser sort, by the unblushing example of the gentility. Vice sits in the halls of legislation, and on the magisterial bench. It is so brazen that it cannot blush; but it shews its viperish sting—its venomous fangs—its dragon teeth—when faithfully rebuked, in the name of God, by the mouths of his servants.

"Yet, and in spite of adverse influences, what Missionary is there who cannot point to a young woman here, who has known and followed Jesus from girlhood, maintained an unsullied reputation, lived unspotted amid surrounding pollution, and passed unscathed through fiery trials? And there again, to some man, in the prime of life, whose piety is all but, if not altogether, undoubted? And yonder, to an aged disciple—her sable countenance all serene—living from day to day on the daily bread, which the Lord never allows her to want—cheered by clear views of divine truth—submis-



sive to the divine will—and hoping for the divine glory. Trials endured with submission, as sent of God, obvious delight in the truth, fondness for the exercises of devotion, joy in the steadfastness of fellow-Christians, sympathy for the ignorant and perishing in their fatherland; in a word, all the ordinary indications of genuine piety, are to be found, in less or greater measure, in these churches.

"No one can visit and examine, with candour and impartiality, say the Presbyterian stations in the parish of Manchester or Trelawney, without being struck also with the great improvement made, and still in progress, in the houses and habits of many of the people. In the former parish, of which we have seen more, there are many settlements of houses whose external appearance bespeaks undoubted social elevation and improved taste. And as to industry, we have heard it said that the small settlers bring into the market as much, or nearly as much coffee, as is produced by the larger properties. And, to the credit of our Mount-Olivet Church be it spoken, that their contributions for 1855 and 1856 averaged 24s., and in the latter 23s., per member. In that church there is not, we believe, one white man; and the whole of the members are settlers, with little freehold properties on which they raise coffee and provisions—their chief, if not their only means of support. Surely the existence of such a fact, even if it were the only one of the kind, is enough to put to shame those remarks about the lazy contentment of the black people, with the swinish mess of pumpkin and saccharine juice, into which Mr. Carlyle's credulity betrayed him, so little to his credit.

"We shall not extend these remarks. We freely, frankly confess, that in Jamaica, and among our Ethiopian brothers and sisters, there is a considerable sprinkling of rogues, vagabonds, thieves, and lazy people, just as in our own country. We do not know whether the proportion is greater or smaller. If greater, will not their vastly inferior advantages—inferior both in duration, quality, and amount—be regarded as a palliation? Far be it from us to insist, that even the few *best* people in Jamaica are perfect. We do not wish them to be thought so. We only demand that justice be done. We claim that the mouths of those who speak lies should be stopped. And we entreat the friends of Jesus, and of Ethiopia, not to let their hearts be discouraged, or their hands be weakened, by calumny and misrepresentation. In no case is it more needful for the impartial—the truth-loving—to hear both sides."

#### ANTI-SLAVERY ITEM.

**MAKING THE BEST OF IT.**—A coloured man at the Northern Liberties Market, whose legs have been cut off above the knees, heard a couple of gentlemen commiserating his condition the other day, when he turned from the work in which he was engaged, and said, laughingly, "Why, g'men, you couldn't do this work widout breaking your backs a-stoopin down." Moral: Whole legs are not essential to happiness, though a contented spirit may be.

## The Anti-Slavery Reporter.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY, 1, 1858.

### ABOLITION OF SERFDOM IN RUSSIA.

WE call attention to the following able letter, from the Berlin correspondent of the *Times*, on the subject of the abolition of serfdom in Russia. We presume we shall not be supposed to be endorsing the views of the writer by reproducing it. To prevent such a misconception, we will just state, that we have every reason to believe that, so far from the immediate abolition of serfdom's being pregnant with evil, it is the postponement of the measure which threatens danger, and a complication of difficulties. The letter is so long, however, that we cannot comment further upon it.

"Berlin, Dec. 22.

"For some years past, the expectation has been growing more and more rife in Russia, and thence through Europe, that the abolition of serfdom was soon about to be decreed. As long as the late Emperor Nicholas was alive, the accession of his successor was looked forward to as the period for the advent of the new era; and as long as the war lasted, the return of peace was the event that was to herald in the removal of this incubus on the productive powers of the State. These periods have come and gone, but serfdom is not yet abolished; Alexander I., who commenced the great work, was cut off suddenly, in the midst of his reforms; Nicholas was diverted from following them up energetically, by his fatuity for an enormous army, and serfdom is the basis of the Russian recruiting system. Alexander II., who at his accession found the nation at war, was by that circumstance prevented at that moment from realizing the fond hopes that had been entertained of him. At the conclusion of the peace, he was even obliged to take a step apparently in the opposite direction, viz. to assure the Russian nobility of the inviolability of their agrarian rights, which precluded the idea of any sudden abolition of serfdom. Since that period, however, a variety of innovations have been introduced by the Emperor into the internal administration of Russia, which, like many others carried out in the reign of his father, are all converging to the same end of gradual abolition, though to the eyes of foreigners at a distance, there often seems to be but little connexion between them and the end proposed: the Russians themselves, however, are so thoroughly cognizant of their tendency and their number, that they have at length fixed even the day when, according to their expectations, the total abolition of serfdom was to take place. That day was the 18th inst., the *fête* of the late Emperor Nicholas, a date which at least has this significance, that it recognises the interest the late Emperor took in the subject, and it is also a matter of popular belief that the Emperor Nicholas, on his deathbed, earnestly recommended this abolition to his son and heir for speedy execution.

"Although the Emperor Alexander has not yet abolished serfdom in Russia, and although it may be many years to come before any measure can be passed that will realize the idea contained in those words, there is not the slightest ground for doubting that he is labouring most strenuously towards that end, as most of his home measures and his foreign policy, since the peace of 1856, abundantly prove. Within the last two months, unless a very generally received report is unfounded, a special committee has been formed in St. Petersburg, under the presidency of the Grand Duke Constantine, for the purpose of expediting every measure in connection with this subject, and the experience of the last few days shews that its labours have not been without good results. That the existence of this committee should be kept as secret as possible will excite no surprise, when it is borne in mind that the expectations of 12,000,000 of human beings in Russia are just now at the highest pitch of tension, looking for an almost immediate deliverance from bondage; that local and sporadic revolts of serfs against their owners are no longer as rare in Russia as they used to be; that the spirit of liberty is now abroad among the people; that both in Kieff and in Moscow the students of the universities have lately made the boldest demonstrations, and offered resistance to the military and police; and that in St. Petersburg language has been uttered at public meetings, that reads like the ordinary clap-trap spoken at radical meetings in England. There exists every possible reason of danger and difficulty for approaching this matter with the greatest secrecy, forethought, and precaution. The abolition of serfdom is a subject of much less interest to the philanthropist than is usually supposed, for the Russian serf, born and bred in the position of a bondsman, is far from the wretched being philanthropists think he must be, and his enfranchisement, while giving him an opportunity, and perhaps compelling him to work out his own independence, will in all probability, at least in the first generation of these unheroic Slavonians, produce them more misery than happiness. To the economist, however, any measure must be of great interest, that immediately affects property valued at hundreds of millions of roubles, and which promises indirectly to open up and stimulate the productive powers of a country larger than all Europe. To the politician few events can be more momentous than a fundamental change in an institution which for upwards of 200 years has served as the basis of the whole internal polity of a nation of 70,000,000 of people. He may well fear lest a too rapid impetus imparted to the aspirations of these impressionable Slavonians may bring Europe to witness a flood of uncontrolled liberty and revolution, such as that produced in 1848 by the well-meant innovations of Pío IX., in 1846.

"As the subject bids fair to force itself soon upon the notice and interest of Europe at large, I send you herewith a memoranda as to the nature and extent of serfdom in Russia, as well as of the measures that have been already taken, with a view to its eventual abolition.

"Serfdom has been of various kinds at dif-

ferent periods of the history of Russia, and at the present moment the position of the peasant is very various in different parts of the empire. In the Baltic provinces of Esthland and Liefland serfdom has been entirely superseded by a series of statutes enacted by Alexander I., between 1804 and 1819, which were subsequently amplified in 1849 for Liefland, and in 1856 for Esthland; in Courland no advance has been made on the legislation of 1817, and in this latter province the enfranchisement is not yet complete. In the kingdom of Poland, also, recent ukases have made the enfranchisement of the bondman dependent solely on his having the will and the means to pay the commutation prices for his services, or the value of the fee simple of the land he occupies: on his making due application to the local official appointed to arrange these commutations, the owner is bound to accept the prices fixed by the Government surveyor, and accord the serf his freedom. In Poland, therefore, serfdom is in process of self-abolition; and in Russia Proper, also, serfdom has been abolished on the domains of the Crown and some private estates, and has generally of late years been much modified and mitigated.

"Serfdom originated in a ukase issued by Czar Boris Godunow in 1601, for the purpose of restraining the nomadic, unsettled habits of his subjects, who, as many Arab tribes do in the present day, were constantly changing their places of abode for more promising localities, or more fruitful pastures; and to this end he enacted that every peasant should settle definitively on the land he had cultivated on the previous Juriew's day. They thus became, by this sole ukase (*glebae adscripti*), assigned to the soil (in Russian, *Krepostnyi*). The administrative measures necessary for watching over the maintenance of this state of things entailed registration and official surveillance; and eventually, in the course of years, the lords of the soil, availing themselves of the inability of the peasants to change their locality, extorted from them compulsory labour on their own estates, and even menial services about their own dwellings. The relation, which had originally been that of 'privileged villenage,' was thus soon converted here and there into 'pure villenage;' and the two relations exist still side by side in Russia, and even on the same estate. It took a long period, however, to break down the vested interest that the peasant originally had in the land he cultivated, and which amounted to the whole usufruct, after deducting a small payment *in natura*, or in labour. By constant encroachments on the part of the lords of the soil, the state of these villeins sank by degrees into that of 'villeins regardant,' and 'villeins in gross,' but the Russian serf was always a fixture on the estate, from which he could be as little separated as the estate from him. It was not till the time of Peter the Great that the system of serfdom obtained its present form, which offers certain features peculiar to Russia, and different from the villenage that formerly existed in England, or the *Hörigkeit*, that held its ground in Prussia, even up to the commencement of this century.

"One of these features of serfdom peculiar to Russia, and which forms the tenure of the larger

part of the land in that country, is of a very communistic nature; a whole village, or other community, occupies a certain tract of land, from which the whole number of male peasants pays a fixed poll-tax to the lord of the manor—the entire body offering an aggregate liability for the shortcomings of any individual member. The community among themselves divide the whole area of the land out into homesteads, according to the number of adult males or married couples among them. Each such homestead occupied by a man and his wife, and children if they have them, is called a *tiaglo*, and this one family cultivates the whole of the *tiaglo*, or as much of it as they can, until the increase of married couples in the community renders it necessary for the number of *tiaglos* to be increased also, which is done by dividing or diminishing the existing homesteads. As the land is, as a matter of course, of various excellence in the different parts of the estate, the various families are shifted about, in compliance with communistic fairness, to all the different homesteads, so that each cultivates the good, bad, and indifferent land turn and turn about. Although this occupation of the land is about the most disadvantageous arrangement than can be conceived, in an economical point of view, and is perfectly destructive of any feeling of property or home, it is strictly in harmony with the instincts of a nomad tribe, and insures to each of its members, at least an existence on a footing of perfect equality with his fellows. When, in the course of time, as many hands have been assigned to agricultural labour as the land requires, and there still remains a surplus of employable population in the serf village, certain of its members turn their attention to different handicrafts; but in all cases work for the commonwealth, which assures them in return their existence in, and a provision for, their old age. Where large amounts of work require to be contracted for, the whole community, as represented by its *Golowa*, or chief, joins in security for the completion of the work, or the fulfilment of the various conditions attached to it. Although it frequently happens that under this arrangement, and favoured by auspicious circumstances, such as good harvests and an equitable owner, &c., these communities accumulate wealth, chiefly in the surplus agricultural produce, not only are their individual members all kept down to the average degree of poverty of the whole number, but their accumulated wealth remains unavailable for the purposes of further economical improvement. In the interest of the State, therefore, this feature of serfdom, as the most injurious to the economical development of the country, calls most urgently for abolition.

“Another feature of serfdom in Russia, which calls the most loudly for abolition in the interests of humanity, and which will probably be the first to be abolished, is the so-called *Obrok* system. This obtains, in cases where domains, formerly large, and with a large number of serfs allocated on them, have in the course of time been so split up and sub-divided by sale or inheritances, that small portions of them are to be found, on which ten, five, or even only three serfs are inscribed. These plots of land being too small, and the num-

ber of serfs being too few to admit of agriculture being carried on there profitably, the owner either lets out his serfs for hire to other proprietors, or gives them his permission to follow any handicraft they may have learnt, and exercise any talent they may possess, on payment to him of an *obrok*, or poll-tax. In this case, the owner generally builds a dwelling-house on the land that the serfs ought to have tilled, and lives on the *obrok* they pay him out of the earnings they make elsewhere.

“These two classes constitute the whole number of actual serfs in Russia, which amount to about 12,000,000; but it is usual, though not strictly correct, to include among the serfs the six classes of peasants also, amounting to an equal number.

“There are, 1st, about 40,000 peasants who enjoy the usufruct of the land on which they are inscribed, on condition of their supplying horses, vehicles, and drivers, for the posting traffic; every twenty-eight males supply one vehicle, three horses, and a driver: they receive a small money payment for the distance driven, and their land is free from any other obligation than the above. 2. There are about 120,000 peasants employed in the forests of the State, which supply timber for the fleet. They receive a small money allowance, in addition to the usufruct of the land they cultivate, and are free from all taxes or other obligations than that of labouring in the forests. This is evidently the ‘common soccage tenure’ of the law-books. 3. There are also about 800,000 peasants attached to the different appanages or domains set aside for the support of the various members of the Imperial family. The peasants, however, who are the best off in Russia, are, 4, those on the Crown domains, in number about 9,000,000. They are not *glebe adscripti*, and they are at liberty to leave their domicile and acquire personal property in the prosecution of trades and professions. The greater number of them, however, are distributed in villages and the joint-stock communes, such as are described above. 5. There are also peasants who have been liberated from serfdom by their owners, to the number of about 1,400,000; these are free from all forced labour, or *obrok*, but are still liable to be taken as recruits, like all other peasants; they can even possess serfs attached to any property they may become possessed of. There is still further, 6th, a class of free peasants who have never been serfs, numbering about 225,000 males. Their position, however, is in reality not nearly so free as that of the liberated serfs, unless they have had a portion of land settled on them by the lord of the manor, or have themselves acquired some landed property.

“The steps which the Russian Government has hitherto taken towards the abolition of serfdom, have been desultory, tentative, and empirical; conscious of the great danger that would accrue to the entire State if any such sweeping principle were enunciated as would strike at the root of the disease, they have confined themselves, up till very lately, to a mere palliation of the symptoms. Alexander I. commenced his reforms in the Baltic Provinces, where the re-



lation of serf to owner was different from that which obtained in the rest of Russia, and closely resembled that which had at that time (1810) just been abolished in Prussia; but his premature death prevented those reforms being carried out any further. The most noteworthy step taken during the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, towards the alleviation of the serf's lot, was the promulgation of the *Svod*, or general code, which at any rate fixed and defined his relation towards his owner, and gave him an appeal to resort to in the judicial institutions it then established. As a preparatory measure to the eventual abolition, must be mentioned, also, the diminution of the period of military service from 25 to 15 years, which admitted of the veterans of the army returning to the land at an age when still capable of labour; and not only was this supply of labour, as such, a great boon to the land, but it was also free labour, which it was intended should form the *avant-courier* of the employment of enfranchised serfs. In the military colonies established under the Emperor Nicholas, there were no serfs admitted at all. The military system, however, that pervaded them, entailing as it did the strictest obedience to a most *exigant* pipeclay discipline, having been found to be a mistake, the colonies have within the last year been broken up. As another preparatory measure, undertaken under the auspices of the Emperor Nicholas, must be mentioned a general survey of the whole empire; for in a matter so closely affecting the most intimate agrarian relations as the commutation of serfdom, an official record and authority were requisite to which to refer, and which should be to Russia what the *Doomsday Book* was to England of the 11th century. Unfortunately, this great work is not yet finished, and this circumstance will form one of the hindrances in carrying out for the present any plan for the abolition of serfdom in Great Russia. As instances in which palliatives were applied to the symptoms, while preparations were being made in secret for attacking the disease, may be mentioned the following:—On occasion of a tumult breaking out at Mohileff, in consequence of a number of serfs having been set to work on a Government building, a ukase forbade that in future serfs should be employed in any other than agricultural labours. In Kaluga so great a subdivision of estates had taken place—in other words, the various holdings had become so small—that extreme poverty and distress had resulted from it. A ukase thereupon commanded that in future no estates should be sold having less than 100 serfs on them, and in a year afterwards that number was raised to 200. (It is on the very small holdings, or where there is no land at all to till, that the situation of the serf is the worst, and approaches the nearest to Slavery.) In Witepsk a noble lady had claimed of her serf such an extortionate *obrok*, or payment, for liberty to earn his bread elsewhere, that he was driven to commit felony to enable him to meet the demand: a ukase thereupon fixed a *maximum* for the *obrok* in all Russia.

"The object of the manifestoes issued by the Emperor Alexander, on the day of his coronation, was, 1. the remedy of the evils inflicted

during the war, on the property of the nobles and the different joint-stock communes, by the abstraction of so many serfs for military purposes, and by the ravages committed on the population by various epidemics; 2 the mitigation of suffering produced by the severity of past laws; 3. the further obliteration of local and religious distinctions throughout his empire: the only measures among the numerous ukases issued on that day that had any reference to the agrarian interests, were the suspension of all further recruiting for the next three years, and the repeal of the law which required that the children born to all soldiers and sailors in active service should of necessity belong to the military or naval services of the State. The chief merit of the great reduction of the army, which has since been carried out in connection with its recent re-organization, lies in the supply to the land of a large quantity of *freelabour*, for the serf that is taken from the nobleman's estate to serve in the Imperial army, becomes, at his discharge from the ranks, a free man. The relief that this reduction of the army brings to the revenues of the State, however considerable, is but small in comparison with the boon rendered to the country by this supply of free labour. The value of this most economical element in the development of the country is so thoroughly recognised by the landowners themselves, more particularly those in the provinces nearest to Prussia, that they are now letting out small plots of land to free families, the rent for which is to be worked out in labour to the extent of one or two days in the week for the whole household. This arrangement is found sufficiently attractive to the peasantry themselves to induce immigration into Russia, which hitherto had presented no attraction to free agricultural labourers, inasmuch as the existing polity of Russia acknowledged no such *status* as this; a free agricultural labourer, and not a serf, either on private property, or as a member of a joint-stock commune, was an abnormality for which the Russian institutions offered no recognised place.

"The right of possessing serfs is a privilege of nobility. In Russia nobility may be acquired, by a commoner obtaining rank in the service of the State; thus, the eight highest grades of civil and military service formerly conferred were hereditary nobility, while the six inferior military, and the two inferior civil grades confer only personal nobility; but during the present reign, this quality of nobility has been restricted to the attainment of the fourth grade in the *Tschin*, or State service. It was the acquisition of nobility, and consequently of the right of owning landed property and serfs by so many comparatively subaltern *employés* without fortune, that had led to the parcelling out of large estates into small plots of land, and the aggravation of serfdom into a state closely approaching to Slavery.

"With a view to diminishing the absenteeism of the nobility, more particularly the old Polish nobility, from the provinces, which is produced in some degree by the fact of their being eclipsed there by the local *employés*, who have not only nobility in virtue of their office, but also power, the Emperor has lately given the nobility of certain governments increased latitude in the selec-

tion of persons to fill judicial offices in the provinces, of such a nature that they will in future be able to elect to them the poorer members of their own order, and thus relieve themselves of the unpleasantness of being rudely jostled in their own neighbourhood by a *roturier* in office. This absence of the nobility from their seats has hitherto been a fruitful source of oppression and injury to the serf population. The ukase enacting these alterations is of this month's date, and has special reference to the *ci-devant* Polish provinces now the governments of Kieff, Podolia, Volhynia, Kowno, Grodno, Wilna, and Minsk, where the noble landowners are chiefly of Polish descent, and therefore the less tolerant of being eclipsed by Russian officials.

"Another Imperial rescript, accompanied by two Ministerial rescripts, dated December 2, and addressed to the Governors of the three governments of Kowno, Grodno, and Wilna, takes a further step towards the abolition of serfdom throughout the empire, and at the same time discloses the machinery with which, and the conditions on which, the Imperial Government desires to see the measure carried out. The Emperor thanks the nobility of the three governments for the goodwill and intentions they have declared to him with reference to an enfranchisement of their serfs, and directs how the three local committees, one for each government, and a general committee of the three for the elaboration of the various details of the measure, shall be constituted. He trusts the nobles will shew themselves worthy of the confidence he reposes in them in calling on them to co-operate with him in this great work, and recognises the increased responsibility thrown on the Government to take care that all the serfs shall not, in obedience to evil inspirations, attempt prematurely to break the bands of fealty that at present bind them to their owners and the land.

"The first Ministerial rescript indicates the outline of the measures which the above-mentioned committees are to elaborate under the surveillance of the provincial governor. The serfs are to be introduced provisionally into an intermediate state, which shall not, however, admit of their changing their domiciles until the government has enacted a law empowering them to do so, which, however, it undertakes to do within twelve years. Not till the promulgation of the said law will they be perfectly free. The landowner retains his undiminished estate, but the serfs are to be left in the occupancy of their present dwellings, which, however, they are to be at liberty to purchase within a fixed term by a money payment or labour. A small portion of land shall also be let to them, for which they shall pay a rent in money or labour. The present estate of the landowner shall be divided into the part he reserves for his own occupation and the part he will let out to tenants; and that which has once been definitively set aside as land to be let out cannot be again absorbed into the portion occupied by the landlord himself. During the provisional period of transition the serf shall not be at liberty to leave the estate without the permission of his owner. On the other hand, it shall not be competent to the lord of the manor to convert any of his present predial serfs into menial serfs; but,

on the contrary, special enactments shall speedily be promulgated to provide for the rapid diminution of this class, either by converting them into predial peasants or by entirely enfranchising them.

"That which gives the two foregoing documents a general importance, in spite of the special address they bear, is the second rescript, issued by the Minister, in the form of a circular, to the Governors and Marshals of the nobility in every government throughout the empire, exhorting them to follow the example set them by the nobility of the three above-mentioned governments, and drawing their attention to the outline of the *modus* recommended by the Imperial Government for bringing about the gradual and eventual abolition of serfdom.

"How enormous a change will be effected in every relation of life in Russia by the actual execution of this great scheme may be seen from an enumeration of the institutions based on serfdom. For instance—1. The whole military system, or that by which recruits are obtained for the army. 2. The supply of labour in manufacturing establishments, which at present consists mainly of serfs on *obrok*. 3. The banking system, which consists at present of numerous Government institutions for receiving the deposits and savings of the people, and which they are at present limited to lending out on mortgage, for which the landed estates with their serfs have hitherto contributed the security. On the 1st of January of this year those deposits amounted to 1,002,500,000 of silver roubles, of which from 800,000,000 to 900,000,000 were lent out on mortgage. 4. The local courts of justice and police in the provinces, and the organization of the rural communes, together with the maintenance of the poor."

#### ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN SURINAM.

THE *Tijdschrift Uitgegeven van wege de Nederlandsche Maatschappij ter Bevordering van de Afschaffing der Slavernij*, for the month of January, ultimo, published at the Hague, and which is the organ of the *Hague Anti-Slavery Society*, contains a translation of an analysis of the projected law for the abolition of Slavery in Surinam, addressed to that Society, on behalf of the Committee of the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society*, in November last. As this document has been given to the Dutch public, we now feel at liberty to present it to our friends. It is only proper to state, that the Committee of the *Hague Society* solicited the opinion of the Committee of the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society* on the projected measure, and that the analysis of it received the most careful consideration. The following extract from a letter, addressed to the Secretary, shews the importance which the *Hague Society* attaches to the analysis, and we have much pleasure in submitting it to our friends, with a translation of the text of the measure itself. We will only add, in conclusion, that we regret the disappoint-

ment expressed by many of our friends, in consequence of what a few of them have considered our "dilatation" in publishing the details of the Dutch measure. They will now see that we were not in a position to do so earlier.

"Blakenbury, near the Hague,  
"Jan. 2, 1858.

"MY DEAR SIR—The Committee of the *Dutch Anti-Slavery Society* request me to offer to the Committee of the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society* their cordial thanks for the valuable and interesting document accompanying your letter of November 13, 1857. They thought it of too high an importance not to make it generally known. A translation, therefore, has just been published in the first Number, since published, of our *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, and I have the pleasure of sending a copy of it by this same post. I shall also take care to forward a copy of the Report of the States-General, which will be made public in a few days.

\* \* \* \* \*  
"Believe me, &c.,  
"ELOUT DE SOETERWOUDE."

The following is a translation of the Bill now before the States-General.

[Translation.]

Sitting of 1856—1857.—(cxxx.)

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN THE WEST INDIES.  
Plan or Form of Law, Letter A.

#### No. 2.

WILLIAM III., by the Grace of God King of the Netherlands, &c. &c. &c.

To all whom it may concern greeting:

Whereas We have taken into consideration the necessity of abolishing Slavery in the Colony of Surinam: having heard our Privy Council, and consulted the States General, Decree as follows, viz.

#### FIRST CHAPTER.

*On the manner of Abolishing Slavery in the Colony of Surinam.*

##### ARTICLE 1.

Slavery is abolished in the Colony of Surinam:

- a. As regards Government slaves, in virtue of a decree of the Governor of Surinam.
- b. As regards the slaves who have, in virtue of the rules established by this law, obtained a legal right of manumission, independent of the right of the masters to demand, within the time of one year, from the Governor, an indemnity, in proportion to the services which they may claim from the slaves.
- c. As regards all other slaves, by means of expropriation in consideration of an indemnity in accordance with the terms of this law. The expropriation will commence within thirty days after the publication of this law.

##### ARTICLE 2.

The form of law to be adopted in regard to the expropriation referred to in the pre-

vious article under letter c will be determined by a separate law to be issued by us.

#### SECOND CHAPTER.

*On the Computation of the Indemnity.*

##### ARTICLE 3.\*

The indemnity is fixed in proportion to the age of the slaves after the following scale, viz.

For a slave either male or female,	fl.
of and under 5 years old	50
Above	
5 years and not exceeding 10	100
10 " " "	15 " 250
15 " " "	20 " 350
20 " " "	25 " 550
25 " " "	35 " 700
35 " " "	40 " 550
40 " " "	45 " 350
45 " " "	50 " 250
50 " " "	55 " 100
55 " " "	" 50

##### ARTICLE 4.

In order to fix the respective ages of the slaves mentioned in the previous article, the slave registers will serve as a guide.

If the month and day of birth do not appear from those registers, the first of July of the year mentioned in the register will be assumed as the birthday.

##### ARTICLE 5.

No indemnity will be granted for the following, viz.

- a. Slaves who are inmates of the Hospital "Batavia," and those suffering from boasi-lepra or infectious elephantiasis, and who should have been registered as such in conformity with the publications of 7th Sept. 1830 ("Government Gazette, No. 13").

With regard to those who are only declared to be suspected as being infected with one of the above-named diseases, one year will be suffered to elapse before determining their state of health, and whether or not an indemnity should be granted for them.

- b. Runaways who have been absent longer than two years.
- c. Those sentenced to hard labour whose time of punishment does not expire until four years later.

The decision with regard to the position of those runaways who may return, as well as of the convicts discharged after the publication of this law, will be fixed by the Governor of Surinam in accordance with the principle of the said law.

##### ARTICLE 6.

The indemnity fixed upon is not only for the person of the slave, but also for the clothing, poultry, and all other moveable articles, which by usage may be considered

\* See Mems. of Modifications in this Article.



as being his own property, or have been placed at his disposal.

#### ARTICLE 7.

The indemnity stated in Article 3 is only applicable to healthy slaves. For unhealthy slaves a lower price will be paid, to be fixed by two medical men, of whom the one will be appointed by the Government and the other by the owner. In the event of a difference of opinion in this matter, the decision will be left to an impartial person to be appointed by the principal Court of Justice at Paramairbo.

#### ARTICLE 8.

The payment of the amount fixed will take place on the placing of the slaves in the possession of the Government. The payment will be made to the owners, or their representatives or attorneys, by orders on the funds of the colony, or on the Dutch Treasury, at the option of the parties.

If no preference is expressed, the payment will be made in the former manner.

#### ARTICLE 9.

In case the master or owner should fail to give up the liberated slaves when called upon to do so, the amount will be paid into the Colonial Treasury.

The same course will be pursued in case third parties should make a claim upon the amount of indemnity due to the master or the owner, unless the parties appoint an umpire to whom the payment can be made.

#### ARTICLE 10.

The payment having been made in conformity with the terms of Articles 8 and 9 constitutes the right to take possession.

#### ARTICLE 11.

All claims of third parties on slaves will cease to exist by this law.

Any rights resulting from claims on slaves connected with estates, will only be applicable, as regards the slaves, to the amount awarded to such slaves as an indemnity.

The holder of the mortgage exercises his right on such amount, whether or not his claim may have expired.

#### ARTICLE 12.

The transfer to, or taking possession of, the slaves by the Government cancels in perpetuity the right of private ownership, and prohibits for ever the transfer of the persons of the slaves, or their labour as trading commodities.

They will consequently be considered in future, together with all previously liberated slaves, as forming part of the native population in general, and be specially described as natives.

#### ARTICLE 13.

The slaves will remain under the superintendence of their masters, or the representatives of the latter, until such time as they are placed in possession of the Government;

and the masters, or their representatives, undertake until then the necessary care and administration over them.

Omission or intentional negligence in this respect is punishable with fine or imprisonment, according to circumstances, in conformity with the separate regulations annexed to this law.

#### ARTICLE 14.

The indemnity to the owners and masters resulting from this law will be provided by special means to be indicated by the law.

#### THIRD CHAPTER.

#### *General Rules respecting all the Liberated Slaves.*

#### ARTICLE 15.

Plantation slaves are understood to mean those who are described in the slave registers as belonging to plantations or grounds; and private slaves those who are described as belonging to private individuals.

Private slaves, who may have worked on plantations or grounds during upwards of two years prior to the publication of this law, are considered as plantation slaves.

Children born of slaves after the publication of this law are free. They, together with those previously born, remain under the supervision of their parents until they have attained fully the age of twelve years.

#### ARTICLE 16.

The liberated slaves are to be subject to the separate and special superintendence of the Government.

They are not to be compelled to perform any other duties or labour than such as may be imposed upon them, either by means of general or special orders by us, or in our name, in accordance with this law.

All slaves who have repaid the amount paid to their former masters by the Government for their freedom will be exempt, should they desire it, from the special superintendence and orders above alluded to.

#### ARTICLE 17.

The slaves will enjoy the abolition of Slavery on the conditions stated in this law, and in the orders appertaining thereto for its execution.

#### ARTICLE 18.

The duties and labour to be imposed upon the liberated slaves, as well as the means of maintaining public order amongst them, will be fixed by special orders indicating the course to be adopted in cases where more stringent measures are necessary; and also determining under what circumstances, and by whom the guilty can be ordered to plantations of correction, or, if necessary, to plantations of punishment.

#### ARTICLE 19.

All those who obtain their freedom by this law are bound to contribute, on the terms to be fixed by us, towards the formation of a

fund for repaying to the Government the cost of their freedom.

## ARTICLE 20.

Those of the male sex are bound to perform services for the general benefit of the colony, as may be determined by us.

They will require a special permission to carry weapons.

## ARTICLE 21.

They will be subject to regulations for the prevention of idleness, vagrancy, and immorality, and the securing of regular instruction to their children, as well as religious education to all, and the encouragement of domestic life.

## ARTICLE 22.

All are bound to contribute, upon the scale to be fixed by us, towards the cost of their religious education, the instruction of their children, and the nursing of the sick, and the relieving of the poor and aged.

## FOURTH CHAPTER.

*On the Liberated Plantation Slaves and their Rulers.*

## ARTICLE 23.

In order to carry out the superintendence of the State over the liberated plantation slaves, the colony of Surinam is to be divided into districts administrated by the resident officials.

## ARTICLE 24.

The liberated plantation slaves are permitted, subject to the stipulations of Article 26, to make agreements, if they so desire, to perform labour for a period of not less than twelve months, either on the plantations or lands occupied by them at the time of the publication of this law in the colony of Surinam, or on other plantations or grounds. Such agreements will be made in the presence of the officials mentioned in Article 23.

## ARTICLE 25.

Besides the labour and superintendence to be imposed upon the officials, mentioned in Article 23, they will take care that the plantation labourers fulfil the duties which they undertake towards the owners of plantations or grounds; and, on the other hand, that the latter carry out strictly the engagements made by them with the labourers.

## ARTICLE 26.

When the liberated plantation slaves do not, within a certain time to be fixed by the Governor of Surinam, avail themselves of the privilege accorded to them by Article 24; or when no owners of plantations or grounds are found who are willing to make engagements with them conformably to the rules; or when such engagements would render the removal of the liberated slaves necessary to places where the laws cannot be duly enforced; or, finally, when they voluntarily surrender themselves to the regulations which may be made by the State in regard to their settle-

ment; in those cases such liberated plantation slaves are formed, under the supervision of the Government officials, into groups to be called *country parishes*.

## ARTICLE 27.

The country parishes will be established in the outer divisions of the colony of Surinam. The necessary grounds for that purpose will be obtained by purchase, if necessary, or by means of expropriation for the general benefit.

Each parish will contain a population not exceeding 1500.

## ARTICLE 28.

The official charged with the administration of the parish will be supported by Elders to be chosen by the inhabitants of the parish.

## ARTICLE 29.

To each parish will be apportioned, as general and transferable property, an extent of land suitable for the cultivation of the sugar-cane and vegetable food.

## ARTICLE 30.

The parishes hold, as far as possible, an independent position. They will be enabled to provide, by means of the fruits of united and mutual labour, for the maintenance, clothing, and habitation of all.

## ARTICLE 31.

In the formation of parishes care will be taken not to separate families, or, as far as practicable, those lots accustomed to united labour.

## ARTICLE 32.

The inhabitants of the parish are, as a rule, agriculturists.

Every one, above the age of twenty and under the age of sixty years, will have to perform five days labour during the week, reckoning the day at nine working hours, including the time required for going to and returning from work.

Those above the age of twelve and under the age of twenty perform labour in proportion to their age and strength.

## ARTICLE 33.

Independent of the transferable right of the inhabitants on the grounds mentioned in Article 29, they may obtain on lease, garden grounds within the limits of the parish.

An extent of transferable ground will be apportioned to each parish for that purpose.

## ARTICLE 34.

The field labour has, as a rule, for its object the culture of the sugar-cane, subject to the exceptions rendered necessary by local circumstances.

The grinding of the cane, and the making of the sugar, will be left to those who bind themselves thereto by special agreement under the sanction of the Governor of Surinam.

Such agreements may be made as for one or more parishes.

## ARTICLE 35.

The manner of administration, and the responsibility relating to the funds of the parishes, will be regulated by the Governor of Surinam, subject to our sanction.

## ARTICLE 36.

The application of Articles 24 and 26 will be preceded by a verbal explanation of the intentions of the lawgivers, and of the comparative advantages resulting from the association of parishes. Those explanations are left to one or more Committees to be appointed by us.

## FIFTH CHAPTER.

*On the Liberated Private Slaves and their Rulers.*

## ARTICLE 37.

The liberated private slaves form associations, the seat of which will be established in the city of Paramaribo, and which, under the name of Guilds, will be governed by Government officials.

## ARTICLE 38.

These Guilds hold, as far as practicable, an independent position.

## ARTICLE 39.

The members of the Guilds consist, as a general rule, of labourers and household servants.

They are bound to perform, from the age of eighteen to sixty-one, some work for the Guild to which they belong, in proportion to their respective trades, conformably with the stipulations of Article 32.

The members of the Guild, above the age of twelve and under the age of eighteen, are compelled to perform labour in proportion to their strength and ability.

## SIXTH CHAPTER.

*On the Legal Rights of the Liberated Slaves.*

## ARTICLE 40.

With regard to civil rights, the liberated slaves will be subject to special regulations in connection with

- a. Entries in the Birth, Death, and Marriage Registers.
- b. Marriage and its results.
- c. Divorce.
- d. Minority.
- e. Guardianship.
- f. Privileges resulting from deaths (in Dutch "Versterfregt.")
- g. Wills.
- h. The right of counsel in so far as regards widows.
- i. Mutual arrangements, and the results thereof.

## ARTICLE 41.

Separate regulations will also be made for the liberated slaves as regards,

- a. Proofs, in cases of dispute, relative to the terms, conditions, and application of agreements and contracts.

b. Proceedings to be adopted by those bringing cases of civil disputes before the officials discharging the duties of administering the districts, parishes, and Guilds.

c. Rights of the judges in cases of disputes regarding agreements or contracts between those liberated by this law and other citizens.

d. The manner of carrying out sentences by which liberated slaves may be subject to fines.

## SEVENTH CHAPTER.

*On Application and Revision.*

## ARTICLE 42.

The rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intention of this law will be issued by us, or, on our behalf, by the Governor of Surinam, subject to our approval.

## ARTICLE 43.

The revision of this law will take place whenever the social position of the liberated slaves may render it necessary, and within ten years after its publication in Surinam.

In making such revision, it will principally be taken into consideration whether, and in how far, the legal position of the liberated slaves can be brought in connection with the general civil laws at that time in force in the colony of Surinam.

## ARTICLE 44.

A detailed report will annually be given to the States General of the measures taken for carrying out the present law.

*Transfer Regulations.*

## ARTICLE 45.

The slaves have no claims to the rights and privileges accorded to them by this law as long as they are not acknowledged as free labourers under the approval and sanction of the magistrates, or are established in the parishes indicated to them, or are inscribed in the registers of the Guilds.

In the meanwhile the existing laws and regulations relative to slaves will remain in force, and the Governor of Surinam will continue to exercise on behalf of the Dutch State all the rights of ownership, with the exception only of the rights of sale and transfer.

## ARTICLE 46.

The Governor of Surinam is entitled, in consideration of special circumstances, to prolong wholly or partly the working of the regulations mentioned in the preceding Article, with regard to one or more districts, parishes or Guilds.

This measure will be adopted for a period of not exceeding one year.

The Governor will notify this resolution, and the reasons thereof, to the Minister of



the Colonies immediately; and we reserve to ourselves the further prolongation of the stipulated time under approval by law.

## ARTICLE 47.

The present law will be proclaimed and published in the Government Gazette of Surinam.

The time when the same will come into operation will be determined by us.

Sitting 1856—57 (cxxx.)  
Abolition of Slavery in Surinam.  
Memorandum of Modifications.

No. 8.

MODIFIED REGULATIONS OF ARTICLE 3,  
PLAN A.

The indemnity is fixed as follows, viz.

- a. For slaves belonging to plantation and other grounds, according to the number of souls living on the same at the time of the transfer.

As regards their valuation, the slaves are divided into four classes, viz.

1. Those belonging to sugar plantations are valued per head at . . . 500
2. Those belonging to coffee, coffee and cocoa, and cocoa plantations, nursery and food grounds, are valued per head at . . . 32
3. Those belonging to timber grounds at per head . . . 240
4. Those belonging to cotton and rice plantations at per head . . . 200

- b. For private slaves per head, in proportion to the respective ages of the slaves, in the following manner, viz.

For a male or female slave	fl.
under and 5 years old	50
Upwards of	
5 years and not exceeding 10	100
10 " " " 15	200
15 " " " 20	300
20 " " " 25	500
25 " " " 35	700
35 " " " 40	500
40 " " " 45	300
45 " " " 50	200
50 " " " 55	100
55 " " "	50

We now append the analysis of the measure.

"To the Committee of the *Hague Anti-Slavery Society*.

"In accordance with the wishes of their friends of the *Hague Anti-Slavery Society*, the Committee of the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society* beg respectfully to submit the following observations on the proposed Bill for the Abolition of Slavery in the Dutch West-India Colony of Surinam, about to be presented to the States-General of Holland.

"It is not a matter of surprise to the Committee, that the proposed project of emancipation is

made to rest on the principle of compensation to the slave-owners. The example set by Great Britain, in this respect, was one likely to be followed by other nations, as offering, perhaps, the readiest solution of one of the chief difficulties in any measure of emancipation that might be proposed. As, however, the Committee hold the opinion that slaveholding is in itself a sin, and that no man has a natural right to hold his fellow-creature as property, it has ever appeared to them, that if compensation were to be given at all, it is rather due to the slave than to the master. Holding these views, the Committee would guard themselves against the supposition that any plan of emancipation based upon compensation to the slave-owners could be regarded by them with complete satisfaction, inasmuch as it involves the recognition of a right of the latter to the persons of the slaves; but in so far as awarding the slave-owners an indemnity, offers an inducement to them to relinquish such proprietary rights in the persons of their slaves as the law may have recognised, the Committee would hesitate to discourage the passing of a legislative enactment based on this principle, lest they should interpose an obstacle to the speedy termination of the sinful relation between master and slave, and become privy to the prolongation of all the misery and suffering it entails. With this reservation, and to this extent, therefore, the Committee are inclined to regard the projected measure of the Dutch Government as a step in advance, and rejoice that the efforts of the friends of emancipation in Holland have proved thus far successful.

"There is, however, one feature in this measure, the abrogation of which the Committee sincerely trust that the friends of the Anti-Slavery cause in Holland will endeavour strenuously to obtain. They refer to the clause by which the emancipated slaves are held responsible, as debtors to the Government, for the amount of the indemnity which the latter may pay to their late owners on their account. It is comprehensible that the State, having recognised the system of Slavery, and therefore legalized, to the extent of such recognition, the property relation between the master and the slave, should consider itself bound to indemnify the master, with a view to get rid of a national reproach and obligation. It was on this principle the Government of Great Britain thought fit to act when it abolished Slavery throughout its dominions. But to render the slave responsible for an act of the State's, by charging him with the pecuniary responsibility of his own manumission, appears to the Committee to be a gross perversion of justice, and they entertain the strongest conviction that if the suggestion be acted upon it will establish a precedent most injurious to the cause in other countries, and will probably retard the extinction of Slavery for many years.

"They would, therefore, most earnestly commend this point to the serious consideration of the Committee of the *Hague Anti-Slavery Society*, and encourage them to resist to the utmost all attempts to engraft upon the proposed measure a principle so radically vicious.

"Having offered these few observations on the general principle of the Bill, the Committee will now comment upon it in detail.

"They presume that, by Clause A, Article 1, chapter 1, Government slaves are emancipated unconditionally; but as by subsequent provisions the emancipated slaves are to be placed under Government superintendence, and are to be held to labour, and to be subject to various regulations, the Committee submit that it would be desirable the friends of abolition in Holland should obtain the introduction of a clause, specifying whether the slaves at present held by Government, and amounting to upwards of five hundred, are to be unconditionally free, or whether they are to be embraced in either of the categories enumerated in the third and subsequent chapters. It would appear scarcely a boon to declare the slaves of the Government free, if the latter is to retain over them the rights which it proposes to assume over those emancipated from private individuals.

"Clause B, Article 1, chapter 1, would seem to shew that there is a class of slaves who are at the present time working out their manumission, and that these are to be emancipated at once, their actual owners merely retaining the right to demand of the Government, within one year from the promulgation of the law, an indemnity proportionate to the balance of service due to them from their slaves. It does not appear, however, that the failure of the owner to claim this indemnity within the period specified entails the penalty of its forfeiture, which it strikes the Committee would be desirable, as a protection to the emancipated slave against litigation on the part of his former owner.

"Clause C, in the same article and the same chapter, the Committee understand to give to the Government the right to take possession of the slaves coming under the third category within thirty days after the publication of the law. But no provision appears to be made for compelling the owners to deliver up their slaves to the Government within the specified term. Articles 8, 9, and 10, chapter 2, do indeed define the conditions on which the Government shall acquire the power to annul the proprietary right of the owner; but there appears to be wanting a clause, declaring that owners of slaves, who have been thus 'expropriated' by the Government, shall be compelled, under penalty of forfeiting the indemnity, to surrender their slaves into the hands of the Government within a specified time. Article 12 does not, in the estimation of the Committee, meet the require-

ments of the case; for though it abolishes the chattel-right, it leaves the master virtually in possession of the labour-right; and it is to be presumed that under such circumstances abuses will occur which it would be well to guard against.

"On the subject of the indemnity the Committee would dwell, in the first place, on the absence, as it appear to them, of any equitable principle on which it is regulated. It must be borne in mind that the emancipated slaves will have to refund to Government the price paid for their own manumission, and as the rate of their wages will be fixed by Government upon an arbitrary scale, most probably a low one, a long time may elapse before they obtain the sum necessary to constitute them *free de facto*, whilst some will even labour all their life without earning it. Under these circumstances it is of primary importance that the indemnity to be paid should be regulated upon an equitable basis. By the Act abolishing Slavery in the British Colonies, the rate of compensation was fixed according to the value of the slaves in each colony, estimated on an average of the purchase-price of each individual during the eight years immediately preceding. For all practical purposes this may be considered to have been a real valuation, and were a similar principle adopted for the Dutch colonies much of the injustice of the actual plan would be obviated. The Committee observe that in the original scale, chapter 2, article 3, the proposed indemnity was computed according to age, but that its basis was subsequently modified by subdividing the slaves into classes, according to occupation and to age. This modification was obviously the result of an after-thought, and appears to have been based upon considerations of the relative value of slave-labour when its products are commanding high prices, as is the case at present. The amended scale, therefore, is made to bear most unfairly on classes 1 and 2. The Committee submit to their friends of the *Hague Anti-Slavery Society* that this attempt to create so unjust a distinction should be strenuously resisted, and would suggest that an effort be made to obtain the adoption of the principle of the original scale.

"The Committee would suggest that some declaration should be obtained, defining the position of slaves under class A, Article 5, chapter 2. No indemnity is to be granted for them, but it is not clear whether the Government assumes the guardianship of them. The exclusion of this class from the category awarding indemnity is based, the Committee presume, upon their being valueless, inasmuch as, by Article 7, unhealthy slaves are to be valued according to their condition, as certified by competent medical authority.

"The Committee observe that, by Article 6, chapter 2, the proposed indemnity is made to em-

brace not only the estimated value of the slaves, but also to cover that of such "clothing, poultry, and other moveables, which, by use, may be considered as his own property, or may have been at his disposal." It does not, however, appear clear to the Committee whether the slave, being emancipated, is to retain such property as his own, with a perfect right to dispose of the same as he may choose; or whether the Government, which, by paying the price of his manumission, acquires a lien on his services, and to a certain extent therefore on his person, also takes possession of such property as he may have, to dispose of it, or to appropriate it for its own purposes. On this point a definite declaration appears desirable.

"The Committee rejoice to find that Article 12, chapter 2, abolishes the property-right in slaves. They have already commented upon the details which occur to them as requiring attention, and trust that it will not be overlooked by the *Hague Society*.

"The Committee understand that within thirty days after the promulgation of the new law it will come into operation. Article 13, chapter 2, seems to leave the period indefinitely open within which the masters are to retain possession of their slaves. The comments which the Committee have made on Clause 12 apply equally to the present one. Unless a period be specified within which the owners of slaves shall be compelled, under penalty, to place their slaves in the hands of the Government, there is a danger that in many instances, and especially in remote districts, the proprietary right will be exercised long after it has legally ceased to exist. It is not, however, quite clear to the Committee whether this contingency has not been foreseen and provided for by the second paragraph of Clause 13, imposing fines or imprisonment for 'omission or intentional negligence' on the part of the owners. As the clause stands, the penalties appear to apply to 'omission or intentional negligence' in the 'care and administration' of the slaves remaining under their master's superintendence; not to 'omission or intentional negligence' on their part, in transferring them to Government, and cancelling their right of private ownership. On this point there should be no doubt.

"The clause declaring that children born of slaves, after the publication of the proposed law, shall be free, is more a nominal boon than a real one. The law, indeed, abolishes Slavery, but it places the late slaves under Government guardianship. The children — either of those born prior, or subsequent to the promulgation of the new law — are to remain, until they are twelve years of age, under the care and supervision of their parents. Now it must not be forgotten, in connection with this clause, that even where the late slaves have bought them-

selves out of the hands of Government, they will not be free to settle where they list, but will be subject to special laws and regulations, and confined to inhabit certain specified localities. Hence, the children born of slaves after the passing of the present law, though emancipated from chattel-slavery from birth, and from their parents' tutelage on attaining the age of twelve, will still be subject to the Government regulations as to residence and rights, as already referred to, and will therefore be only nominally free.

"The clause under consideration does therefore, in point of fact, mean nothing, though it sounds plausibly.

"The Committee fear that Clause 16 leaves a large opening for abuse. They desire to believe that the Dutch Government would not prove a hard taskmaster; but the clause in question manifestly gives it the power to prescribe the kind and manner of labour the emancipated slaves are to perform, and leaves the latter without redress in the event of a just cause of complaint. Though the Government might be disposed to be lenient, it cannot always answer for its subordinates; and some clause should be introduced giving the emancipated slaves a right to appeal against oppressive acts. The same remarks are applicable to Article 18.

The Committee have already commented, in general terms, upon the principle of the repayment, by the slave to the Government, as set forth in Article 19, of the price of his manumission. Considering the importance of this clause, and the injustice which, if it be retained, it will be the means of perpetrating, the Committee may be excused if they dwell upon it in this place, coming as it does in order, in the details of a measure on which their opinion is solicited. The principle of granting an indemnity to the slave-owners is already a vicious one, but to make the slave repay to Government the price of that natural freedom, the responsibility of having deprived him of which the Government assumes, is a cruel aggravation of the injustice of which he is a victim. Be it disguised as it may, it is a perpetuation of the property right, which, by Article 12, is asserted to be for ever abolished, in so far as private ownership is concerned, for it gives to the Government a lien upon the liberty and the person of the emancipated slave, which, though it be only to the extent of the amount of the indemnity paid for him, is a virtual transfer to itself of the property-right of the owner, and altogether incompatible with the idea of freedom. The clause will operate with extreme severity upon the weak and the sickly, and the aged, but especially upon those who are married and have offspring. Articles 20, 21, and 22, must be considered in connection with it, as well as the scale and character of the proposed indemnity;



and also that the rate of wages will be fixed, as has already been stated, according to an arbitrary standard, to be fixed by the Government or by the employer. It is clear that the condition of the man, with a family of children under age, and incapable of working; but whom he must nevertheless support as well as purchase, will be very different from that of the unencumbered slave, whose term of servitude will be limited by the amount of the indemnity he has to labour for. The whole of this section of the Bill is, the Committee respectfully submit, highly objectionable, and, in their opinion, goes far to defeat its general purpose. In fact, though the Bill abolishes the system of Slavery, this section of it brings into operation a system of coerced labour, which is likely to last many years, and will, whilst it endures, be found to work most unsatisfactorily. It inaugurates a system of apprenticeship more oppressive and objectionable than the one which obtained in the British West-India Colonies, and which proved so disastrous in operation, that its abolition speedily became imperatively necessary. The Committee, therefore, venture again to express the earnest hope that the friends of abolition in Holland will make a vigorous effort to defeat so deliberate an attempt to perpetuate a system of Slavery scarcely one degree removed in oppressiveness from the one it is proposed to abolish.

"Having commented, at considerable length, upon a clause which involves the whole principle of compulsory labour, it seems scarcely necessary to dwell long upon chapter 4, and its various articles, which are but the application in detail of a principle radically vicious. Article 26 renders it obligatory on the liberated plantation slaves to work either for the owners of plantations, or for the Government; and though by Articles 30, 32, and 34, such liberated plantation slaves are to be settled in groups not exceeding 1500, the lands on which they are to be located will be only plantations under Government surveillance, which they must cultivate in such manner, and under such officials and regulations as the Government may choose to specify, and at such rate of remuneration as it may choose to fix. Nor does it seem humane that the aged and feeble should be compelled, as by the first section of Article 32, to perform the same amount of labour as the young and vigorous. The Committee would earnestly recommend the careful revision of the whole of this chapter, if the principle of making the slave repay to Government the amount of his indemnity, which renders this chapter necessary, should be retained.

"The fifth and sixth chapters, which are taken up with the details of the system on which it is proposed to govern the liberated slaves, appear to the Committee to be likewise extremely objectionable.

"By establishing them in 'country parishes' and 'guilds,' and by bringing them under special regulations in relation to their civil rights, as specified in the sixth chapter, Articles 40 and 41, caste is created, for they are thereby placed beyond, and altogether without the pale of the common law of the colony, and are constituted, to all intents and purposes, a distinct class of the community. Such legislation can proceed only upon the assumption that the emancipated negro is entirely unfit for freedom, than which no greater error can exist. Besides, and admitting for a moment the expediency of establishing the liberated slaves in 'country parishes' and in 'guilds,' there does not appear to exist any sufficient reason wherefore the ordinary laws of the colony, bearing upon the subjects embraced in chapter 6, should not be in every respect adapted equally as well to them as to the ordinary population. Much present and future evil must arise from creating such distinctions, and the Committee sincerely trust that no exertions will be spared to prevent their introduction. They observe, by Article 43, of the seventh chapter, that Government contemplate it may be necessary to revise this portion of the new law within ten years; but as it is to be presumed the colony of Surinam will progress within that time, and as it is not contemplated to assimilate the 'legal position' of the liberated slaves with the general civil laws that may be then in force, unless the excluded caste shall be judged entitled to the privilege, in virtue of the progress it has made, the Committee see there is a prospect of the liberated slaves being excluded, for an indefinite period, from the rights and privileges of Dutch citizenship. There will also be a perpetuation of caste and prejudice against race, which will, sooner or later, be productive of serious mischief, as it must engender feelings of enmity between the two classes, into which the colony will be divided.

"In submitting the foregoing observations to their friends, the Committee have felt anxious to recognise as indications of progress, whatever they saw of good in the proposed measure. They would have hailed a complete measure of emancipation with unfeigned satisfaction; but though unable to give unqualified approval to the one on which their views have been solicited, they would, nevertheless, congratulate the friends of negro emancipation in Holland on the success, partial though it be, which has attended their efforts, and encourage them to prosecute their enterprise with a continued and implicit faith in God's providence, to bless it and bring it to a happy termination.

Signed, on behalf of the Committee,

L. A. C.

27, New Broad Street, London,

11th Nov. 1857.

## THE IMMIGRATION SLAVE-TRADE.

WE have much pleasure in giving publicity to the following Report, from the Committee appointed by the *Liverpool Chamber of Commerce*, "to consider the French plan of obtaining colonial labourers from Africa, and to confer with the *African Association* thereon." It is encouraging to see so influential a body interesting itself in this matter, and we hope to see Manchester soon follow the example of Liverpool. It is a proof how general is the feeling against the French scheme.

We deeply regret that owing to the crowded state of our columns, we cannot introduce the comments on the scheme in which *Le Constitutionnel*, a Parisian newspaper, has indulged. In our next, however, we shall do so; and it will be seen that the articles in the *Times* have produced the most mischievous results.

The last West-India mail brought over the subjoined statement. Probably our next advices will shew that the mortality has been even greater.

A fresh batch of immigrants had arrived at Martinique by the ship *Clara* from the coast of Africa.

The mortality on board this vessel was much higher than in any of the Coolie ships previously received. Out of 325, no less than 35 died during the passage, which lasted 29 days, and a number of those landed had to be sent to the hospital, where many of them have died. The *Clara* is described as a small vessel, of not more than about 300 tons measurement.

These were the first immigrants introduced by Regis and Co., of Marseilles, under their new contract with the Government. It was mentioned that symptoms of discontent had been manifested by the African immigrants in the quarter of Lamentin, and an attempt at flight to the neighbouring island of St. Lucia had been discovered on the Chateau Lezard estate. The labourers of several estates were in the plot. The crops of the past eleven months of the year shewed a falling off compared with the corresponding period in 1856: of sugars there had been made 49,346 hhds. this year, being 4666 less than last year; and a decrease appeared also in rum, coffee, and cocoa.

The following is the Report of the *Liverpool Chamber of Commerce*—

## REPORT.

"Your Committee beg to report that they have not been favoured with any communication from the African Association; but from other sources they have received valuable information on the subject referred to them, upon which they have framed the following observations:—

"The idea of obtaining free immigrant labour from Africa, for the successful cultivation of the West India colonies, seems to have originated with the English Government, in the year 1857.

"For that purpose her Majesty's steam-ship

'Growler' made several voyages between the Kroo Coast (a part of Africa where the slave-trade or slavery does not prevail) and British Guiana. Every care, however, was taken that the emigration should be perfectly free; and, to prove this, your Committee would refer to a despatch, addressed by Earl Grey to the Governor of British Guiana, dated 30th October, 1847, when he proposed to give up the transport of the emigrants entirely to merchant vessels, from which the following is an extract:—

"The manner of conducting the service must afford an absolute and indisputable security against any immigrants being taken without their free consent, obtained by fair and well-founded statements. Her Majesty's Government cannot for a moment admit the validity of the arguments in favour of Africans being rescued from slavery by purchase, in order that they may be removed to a state of freedom.

"Such a proceeding would be sure to make more slaves than it redeemed, and to make them in the worst way, by furnishing, like the slave-trade itself, a provocation to the system of barbarism, outrage, and warfare, by which that traffic is fed.

"It is indispensable, in order to guard against abuses of this nature, that the services should be conducted under the regulations of the Government, and on those parts only of the African coast where slavery and the slave-trade are found not to prevail.

"Such a superintendence is, in fact, as necessary to the success of the undertaking as it is essential to the character of this country, for any occurrence of abuse would infallibly put an end to the operations."

"Notwithstanding the early success of this movement, it was finally abandoned when found to be inconsistent with the conditions laid down by Earl Grey; and it is only needful to allude to it now for the purpose of shewing that we can enter upon the examination of the French scheme free from all reproach.

"Your Committee believe that the original idea of the French Government was no less pure than our own, and that while additional labour was eagerly sought for its West-India colonies, Freedom was to be the essential condition of obtaining it.

"Hence the first attempt was made, about the beginning of 1857, to engage negroes at those parts of the African coast where the slave-trade did not prevail, but only about 300 labourers could be thus obtained. A contract then seems to have been entered into with MM. Regis, of Marseilles, a house largely connected with the African trade, and having already an establishment at Whydah, the old slave port in the Bight of Benin, for the supply of 10,000 negroes, to be landed at Guadaloupe, Martinique, and Guiana



(Cayenne), and for whom they were to receive 20*l.* per head. Doubtless the nominal condition was that emigration should be free, but after the former experience of the French Government, added to our own, it must have been known that this was utterly impracticable. The emigrants were to be apprenticed for ten years, and to receive about 10*s.* per month as wages, from which was to be deducted the cost of their transport.

"It is notorious that the prevalent state of labour on the west coast of Africa is that of Slavery, and therefore little or no labour can be had for emigration but by purchase. Accordingly, MM. Regis had no other resource than to contract with the Indian chiefs for the supply of negroes at a certain price per head.

"It may be true that no negroes were accepted who had not gone through the formality of an inquiry as to their willingness to leave the country on the terms proposed, but this proceeding must be regarded as a mere delusion, both on account of the source of their supply, and their utter incompetency to understand the nature of the arrangement forced upon them.

"The contract with MM. Regis contained the elements of failure. No sooner had they commenced operations than the price of fifty dollars a head, which they offered, was immediately outbid by the Spanish and Portuguese slave dealers, who offered ninety dollars; and thus the result has been (we quote the words of Lord Clarendon), 'the renewal of the slave-trade, unmitigated and undisguised,' without any corresponding advantage to the French colonies.

"But, perhaps, the special point of view from which the Chamber should regard this scheme is, the injury it has already inflicted upon the growing legitimate trade of Africa, respecting the previous condition of which the communications of Mr. Campbell, our Consul at Lagos, to Lord Clarendon, have developed the most gratifying facts.

"That gentleman has estimated the export of palm-oil alone, in 1856, from the Bight of Benin, at 20,000 tons, of the value of 1,000,000*l.* sterling; and this is nearly all paid for in Glasgow and Manchester fabrics, 'without which,' Mr. Campbell adds, 'no foreigner can carry on the trade' in this article. Nearly the whole of this trade has sprung up since the suppression of the slave traffic, and has greatly declined since its renewal. He refers also to the cultivation of the ground-nut, the great obstacle to which is the 'alarm and uncertainty frequently occasioned by the threatened hostile movements of the old slave-trade miscreant monarchs, the kings of Dahomey and Kosoko, who, encouraged by the old slave dealers remaining on the coast, do not abandon the hope of having the slave-trade revived.'

"But the article of largest growth in Africa, and an increased supply of which is of the great-

est consequence to the country, is cotton. In Yoruba and the adjoining States alone upwards of seven millions of pounds are annually grown. In fact, the whole population of Western Africa are almost entirely clothed in the produce of their own cotton cultivation. Legitimate trade would soon convince them that it was more profitable to send us the raw material, and take the cheaper and lighter products of our looms in exchange, than to manufacture for themselves. It may be asked, what prevents this? 'It is only in those localities where the slave-trade has been greatly suppressed,' says Mr. Campbell, 'and which possess navigable rivers, . . . that the fabrics of Manchester and Glasgow have as yet penetrated; and even in those countries they are at present only used for holiday or ornamental purposes, the coarse strong-manufactured cloth of the country forming the ordinary working dress of the inhabitants.'

"The import of cotton from the slave coast of Africa is not an experiment which has yet to be tried. Mr. Thomas Clegg, of Manchester, some years ago, conceived the idea of opening up a direct trade with the native princes. Through the Missionaries he offered to purchase all the cotton that they could supply without restriction. His import for the first year was only 235 lbs.; that for the second, 14,000 lbs.; that for the third year, 30,000 lbs. This year (1857) he has already received upwards of 200,000 lbs., and but for the revival of the slave traffic would, in all likelihood, have received double that quantity. The business having become too large for the Missionaries, and two European agents having fallen victims to the climate, Mr. Clegg brought over African youths, placed them in his own mill, instructed them in the mechanical trades, and in the art of cleaning the cotton without injury to the fibre, and then sent them back as his agents for its purchase in Africa.

"In one of the communications before alluded to, Mr. Campbell states, 'The same obstacle which at first impeded the progress of cotton in the United States—the want of machinery to clean and prepare large quantities for export—now operates against its more extensive export from Africa, no one having yet ventured to embark capital in the trade.'

"Mr. Clegg, however, has done what could be done single-handed, to supply this want. His agents contract for the delivery of the cotton at the store, and a large portion of it is paid for in cotton-gins, with practical instructions for their use. In this way he has sent out upwards of 130 gins.

"This honourable enterprise has received a severe check by the operations of MM. Regis. Mr. Campbell, on the 3d September, writes thus—'If his Imperial Majesty persists in purchasing slaves at Whydah, I fear we must say good bye to cotton from this part of Africa. Al-



ready the Abbeokutans have gone to hunt for slaves; the Ibaddans, a more numerous and warlike people than the Abbeokutans, are preparing to do the same in the Jaboo country, near to Lagos.

"The people of England have cherished the hope that this hideous traffic in human beings, condemned by the Congresses of Vienna and Verona, by special treaties with France herself, and with most of the African chiefs on the slave coast, to put down which we have armed our cruisers and expended vast treasures, of both life and money, was at length giving way before the legitimate claims of a profitable agriculture and a successful commerce.

"Your Committee have shewn how this hope has been frustrated. Fortunately the English Government seems to be fully sensible of the importance of the question. Liverpool is deeply interested in its right and speedy settlement; and your Committee recommend that the following memorial should be adopted, and forwarded to the Earl of Clarendon and to the President of the Board of Trade:—

**"THE MEMORIAL OF THE LIVERPOOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HUMBLY SHEWETH—**

"That your Memorialists have had under their consideration the plans of the French Government for the supply of additional labour to her West-Indian and South-American colonies, by the purchase of slaves on the African coast, under contract for ten years' service.

"That your Memorialists consider that, no matter how humane may be the treatment of such labourers, when settled in the colonies, or the precautions which may be taken to prevent abuses in their transport, the scheme can only be regarded as a practical revival of the slave-trade, and one which less scrupulous Governments may adopt, without any conditions or safeguards whatever.

"That your Memorialists have learned, with the deepest regret, from the communication of Her Majesty's Consul at Lagos, that such has already been the case, and that the slave traffic, suppressed for three years at an enormous cost to the country, has been re-commenced, to the vast injury of the peaceful pursuits of industry, in the cultivation of the soil, and the growing commerce between Africa and this country, especially in cotton and palm-oil.

"That your Memorialists are gratified to find that your Lordship's convictions are in accordance with their own, and they would respectfully urge your Lordship to keep the subject before Her Majesty's Ministers, with a view of inducing the French Government to abandon its schemes, and, in preference, to encourage that legitimate commerce which is the only means of effecting the civilization of Africa.

"And your Memorialists will ever pray, &c.

"Adopted by the Council, January 7, 1858."

## ARTICLES FROM THE TIMES.

### REVIVAL OF SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE-TRADE.

WE complete our record of the articles on the revival of Slavery and the Slave-trade which have appeared in the *Times*. The following appeared on the 29th of December:

"After the lapse of a quarter of a century since the final emancipation of the negro we ought to find ourselves in a position to speak with some confidence on the several points connected with that important question. The facts, indeed, are clear enough, but the conclusion is not satisfactory, nor the escape very easy to find. The philanthropists can undoubtedly appeal to one great achievement. The liberation of the black has been complete, unqualified, and permanent. All the cruelties or miseries which may have accompanied the institution of Slavery in our colonies, whether avoidable or otherwise, have absolutely ceased; no British planter any longer possesses human property, nor can it be said that any vestige of the old system is now discernible. What the Anti-Slavery agitators sought to abolish they have abolished utterly, and the shame and the scandal have disappeared from our territories as entirely as if they had never been known. With this admission, however, we fear the approval of our policy must be terminated. On every other point predictions have been falsified and expectations disappointed. *The negro himself, though he has become free, has not become wise or industrious. Our planters have not found that free blacks make good labourers. Our colonies have not risen in prosperity and affluence above the slaveholding colonies of other states, and, though the trade in slaves has decreased upon the whole, its vitality is so plain and strong, that at this very moment we are making a considerable addition to the force of our African squadron. Every thing, in short, has failed, except emancipation itself. Negroes are free, but they are also brutalized; the West Indies have been ruined; immense tracts of the most productive soil in the world are left uncultivated for the want of labour; and other nations, discerning in our policy a warning rather than an example, are pushing the opportunities of Slavery to the utmost, and making fortunes over the heads of British colonists.*

These results are traceable in the main to the spirit of a legislation directed exclusively to the eradication of Slavery without regard to any of the functions which slaves had until then discharged. The agriculturists of our tropical colonies were suddenly deprived of the labour by the aid of which their crops were produced, and the controlling authorities, instead of assisting them in replacing the lost element, appeared to charge themselves only with the duty of scrutinizing and impeding all efforts in this direction, lest any thing resembling Slavery should be introduced in another form. This was not unnatural, nor, perhaps, unnecessary, but in the meantime cultivation was suspended and property destroyed, while British consumers repaired to foreign markets for the very commodities which our own countrymen had been forbidden to produce. *The emancipated negro would do no work at all. No attempts have succeeded in inspiring him with the wants or yearnings of civilized life, and, as his*

*needs are small, his exertions are small also. The climate enables him to dispense with refinements of shelter or apparel; the soil provides him with sustenance; and vagrancy and indolence leave him at least as much like a beast as ever, though he is no longer a beast of burden. The obligation of labour no longer rests on these members of the race of Ham. The West-India squatter can vegetate in absolute idleness, without compulsion or enticement to employ his faculties in work.*

"To complete the force of this case, it should be remembered that while fertile estates are lying untilled for want of labour, and European manufacturers are anxiously looking for the cotton which such labour would supply, an inexhaustible store of the agency required is left unemployed and useless in other lands. After what has been asserted, on impartial testimony, respecting the interior economy of African States, it must, perhaps, be considered impracticable to devise a free-labour market on that coast, though the difficulty, be it observed, is wholly unconnected with the proposed employment of the negro. *No person asserts that the actual condition of the black on his native soil would not be bettered by his removal to a country where he would learn the dignity and the profit of labour, and be accessible to the influences of civilization and religion.* No person denies that in the present state of our colonies negroes could be put to work there without the least fear of their engagements degenerating into Slavery. All the embarrassment arises from the fact, that, if blacks were once known to be wanted, and to be saleable on the coast for some sort of price, they would forthwith be kidnapped for consignment by their own chiefs, a proceeding which would revive all the horrors of internal war, and dissipate the chances of improvement which honest traffic is beginning to yield. By transporting Africans from their own country to the West Indies we could benefit all parties together—the colonist, the labourer, and the European consumer of tropical produce, but we are afraid to shew our desire for such supplies lest manstealing should be commenced anew. If we could but surmount this difficulty, we should be not only restoring the prosperity of our own colonies, with advantage even to the blacks themselves, but we should probably be going far to suppress the slave-trade as it survives. That free labour can beat slave labour is undoubtedly true, but unfortunately the free labour is not forthcoming, and slave labour wins in default of opposition.

"In one or two colonies, indeed, a more judicious policy has been carried out, and there, although the labourer is 'protected' by regulations of extraordinary stringency, Slavery has been fairly proved to be a less remunerative agency than the hired toil of a free man. In the Mauritius the wants of the planter are supplied by importations of coolies from India, but the jealousy with which the privileges of these immigrants are regarded will almost create a smile. They are to be had in India by thousands, the country being overstocked with population, the rate of wages in the Mauritius being four times as high as in their own markets, and the sea passage being short and practicable. The planters of the colony,

however, are not allowed to go and hire these workmen on their native soil, for fear a glut of labour thus introduced should be attended with excessive competition, low wages, and hard fare. The colonial Government decides every year what amount of labour is fairly required, and regulates the importations accordingly. As soon as a ship-load of coolies arrives, an officer styled the 'Protector' goes on board, compares the cargo with the official list, to see that the assigned limits have not been exceeded; inquires whether any coolie has any complaint to make; and then lodges the whole batch in a dépôt on shore, where they are maintained for two days. The object of this suspense is, that they may receive full information as to the value of their labour, and may not be entrapped into any injudicious engagement. After they have been fully impressed with their own consequence, they admit the visits of the planter, who determines how many he would like to hire, and, if his offers are acceptable, master and men proceed together to the magistrate, attended by the protector, and a legal contract is made for a certain period, the master stipulating to provide his labourers with a free passage back to India, and giving securities for the performance of his promise. If a planter chooses to conduct an importation of coolies on his own account, he can only do so subject to the same formalities and guarantees.

"Few persons would complain of these arrangements in the interest of the labourers, and yet, restricted as they are, they have sufficed to make the plantations of the Mauritius more productive than those of any slaveholding colony. The labour thus obtained can beat slave labour in open market; the colonists are prosperous, and the coolies gratified by wages which enable them to retire to India in comfort. Can nothing of this sort be done for the West Indies? Nothing to reverse all the deplorable conditions which exist at present? Our colonies ask only for labour—not slave labour, for free labour is both better and cheaper. With this aid they can rebuild their own fortunes, multiply to any extent our supplies of cotton and sugar, and deal at last a death blow to Slavery by rendering it no longer remunerative to its patrons."

#### ANTI-SLAVERY ITEM.

THE DRED SCOTT DECISION IN THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE.—The General Pre-emption Act of 1841 contains a stipulation that the recipient of its benefits shall be "a citizen of the United States," or shall "have filed his declaration of intention to become such." By the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, at the last December term, it is held, in substance, that "a free negro of the African race, whose ancestors were brought to this country and sold as slaves, is not a citizen within the meaning of the Constitution of the United States." Free negroes cannot, therefore, legally claim the benefits of the pre-emption lands; and claims of persons of the class contemplated by that decision have been ruled out and regarded as null, we learn, at the General Land Office.—*Washington Star, Aug. 20.*